

To: DOnofrio, Cris[DOnofrio.Cris@epa.gov]
From: Jimenez, Christopher
Sent: Mon 3/23/2015 4:55:25 AM
Subject: Re: St. John Methyl Bromide Response - Update

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Cris, thanks for putting this together it will be helpful for us to explain to management what are plans are. At some point tomorrow I would for us to share all relevant phone numbers. I will send cid and Cmad number tomorrow morning. I was able to trade texts with cid Dooley about an hour ago. They will call me in the REOC tomorrow. I'll Brief the and refer them to you once you are ready to talk to them. Have a good flight and be safe. Try and give us a call once your on scene. Good work this weekend. I am so glad you were on phone duty for this.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 23, 2015, at 00:43, DOnofrio, Cris <DOnofrio.Cris@epa.gov> wrote:

All:

As can be typical in the early phase of a response, there were several inaccuracies in the information initially reported to EPA by others. The original report that the incident occurred at the La Sirena Villa in Coral Bay was incorrect. Management at La Sirena Villa provided D'Onofrio/Garrison with the contact information of the paramedic who transported the family members to the hospital. The paramedic confirmed that the incident occurred at the Sirensa Condominium Resort that overlooks Cruz Bay, St. John. OSC Garrison visited the condominium today and met with a maintenance person who indicated that the victims were staying in the second floor of Unit J of the condominium; the first floor of Unit J was fumigated with methyl bromide on 3/18/15. It is currently suspected that the victims were in the unit for at least a portion of the time that the fumigation was conducted or that they returned to their unit shortly thereafter. The maintenance person confirmed that Terminex conducted the fumigation. He also stated that other units had been fumigated by Terminex in October 2014, reportedly without incident. The Unit J condominiums are currently unoccupied and secured.

The paramedic confirmed that she received a call to the condominium at approximately 01:17 hours on 3/20/15 and transported the victims to the hospital. The victims had previously been to a party and at that time believed they had food poisoning. She reported that 3 of the sickened victims remained at the hospital; the fourth returned to the condominium to retrieve the family's belongings. While at the condominium, the fourth victim began experiencing symptoms and required emergency transport to the hospital (the same paramedic responded). All four victims exhibited symptoms consistent with acute exposure to methyl bromide and remain in serious condition.

The paramedic also reported that during her second visit, she smelled a strange, sweet odor in the condominium which she described as similar to over-ripened fruit. She also stated

that she suffered from a headache and scratchy throat after her second visit. She awoke the next morning with a severe headache and wasn't sure if it was related to the incident or due to lack of sleep. She was unaware of the potential for a poisoning at that time. Her symptoms resolved with over the counter medications and rest.

The paramedic also provided D'Onofrio with contacts for the St. John Fire Department Chief. The Chief has offered to assist in providing/filling SCBA bottles for this response and any other additional support as needed.

D'Onofrio is coordinating with Jack Housenger and Jeff Dawson of the HQ Office of Pesticide Programs. Both have provided technical assistance and are providing guidance on the approach to investigating the exterminator's compliance with the pesticide use/labeling and on the currently allowed usage of methyl bromide under the 2005 ban pursuant to the Montreal Protocol.

OSC Garrison visited the St. Thomas Hospital where all 4 victims are being treated. The doctor felt sure that the victims had suffered acute exposure to methyl bromide. When Garrison offered the potential for ATSDR assistance, the doctor expressed an interest in obtaining help from a physician with experience in treating acute methyl bromide exposure. D'Onofrio contacted Leah Escobar of ATSDR who has provided consultation with a toxicologist and is coordinating the assistance of another physician.

Additional personnel have been mobilized to assist in the investigation and sampling being planned for this incident. Raj Singhvi of ERT, 2 SERAS contractor personnel, 2 RST personnel and OSC D'Onofrio are due to arrive on St. Thomas on the afternoon of 3/23/15. Brian Kovak of ERT, Marshall Gray of ORD and Mike Matarazzo of Region 2 SHEMP have provided technical assistance related to the behavior/hazards of methyl bromide and the recommended health and safety precautions.